

Beatty (L. H.)

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

BY

LOUIS H. BEATTY, M. D.,

PROFESSOR OF

OBSTETRICS AND DISEASES OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN,

IN THE

PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE.

COURSE 1847-8.

PUBLISHED BY THE CLASS.

PHILADELPHIA:

JOHN H. GIHON, PRINTER,
NORTH EAST CORNER OF SIXTH AND CHESTNUT STREETS.

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PHILADELPHIA, NOVEMBER 16, 1817.

PROF. L. H. BEATTY, M. D.

SIR,—

At a meeting of the Students of the Philadelphia College of Medicine, held November 15th, the undersigned were appointed a Committee to request for publication the very able and interesting Introductory Lecture, delivered by you at the opening of your course for the present session. We therefore respectfully request a copy for said purpose, by complying with which you will confer great favor upon the class.

Very Respectfully,

Your Obedient Servants,

N. RICHARDS MOSELEY, of Penn.,
C. DWIGHT PRESTON, of Conn.,
THOMAS KENNEDY, of Va.,
L. G. VINAL, of Me.,
W. Z. W. CHAPMAN, of Mass.,
E. J. RECORDS, M. D., of Del.,
E. BENTLY HALL, of N. J.,
E. de St. ROMES, of La.,
G. W. LOMAX, of S. C.,
J. C. HATFIELD, of N. B.,
A. P. GROONER, of N. Y.

PHILADELPHIA, NOV. 17TH, 1817.

GENTLEMEN:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your polite note requesting for publication a copy of my Introductory Lecture.

The hesitation I personally feel in reference to its publication, yields to my disposition to gratify the wishes of the Class, and I accordingly place it at their disposal.

Permit me, through you, to make my acknowledgment of obligation to the Class, for this unexpected courtesy, and to yourselves, gentlemen, for the complimentary manner in which you have been pleased to communicate their wishes.

With great esteem,

Your Obedient Servant,

LOUIS H. BEATTY.

To Messrs. N. RICHARDS MOSELEY, &c.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

I cannot command language, gentlemen, to express the emotions of my mind on entering upon the duties and responsibilities of the chair to which I have been called in this Institution. I need here, however, only express my sense of obligation to those concerned in the appointment for the distinguished mark of their confidence, and to you, gentlemen, for the kindness and sympathy so visible in every face.

Why, we are led to inquire, are we assembled here to-day? Why do we see around us so many interesting, enthusiastic, and we will add, intelligent countenances? We have met upon an interesting occasion; we have met to introduce a course of Lectures in an Institution which has for its object the cultivation of medical science generally, and especially the impression on your minds of correct medical principles.

Never has there been an age more distinguished than that in which we live; distinguished for great changes and commotions in the political world; distinguished for rapid progression and improvement in the arts and sciences—but more distinguished for the multiplication of means and facilities for acquiring a knowledge of these sciences. Among these means institutions like this hold a conspicuous place, as affording facilities not only for the cultivation, but for the elevation of the science of medicine; not only for teaching what is already known in our profession, but for directing the inquiring and aspiring mind in the philosophic track after hidden but important truths and principles; for teaching the medical student to exercise that valuable endowment, common sense, to think for himself, to analyze, to compare, to bring the fine spun theory of the innovator, and the hazardous experiment of the empiric to the test of a sound judgment and a well instructed mind.

The course of instruction tending to these very desirable objects will lead you, gentlemen, to contemplate nature in some of her most interesting operations, and we may hope will also lead you through nature, to the contemplation of nature's great and incomprehensible Author. It is alleged of the study of medicine that it leads to skepticism. We beg leave to deny the allegation. Our opinion is just the reverse. This is an important point, gentlemen; let us dwell on it for a moment. It has been said an undevout astronomer is mad. We go further, and say an undevout student of any department of nature is mad. If with the astronomer we tread the solar walk and contemplate that mysterious agency by which the planets wheel their annual courses round the sun, or follow the comet in its eccentric flight across the orbits of the planets far into the unknown regions of space, or rising, direct our attention to the fixed stars, those supposed suns to other systems of planetary worlds, in all we find subjects of admiration and incentives to devotion.

If we descend to the atmospheric region wonders meet us at every step; gravitation and attraction, light, heat and electricity, the gentle vernal shower and widely wasting storm, the mild zephyr that kisses the unruffled surface

of the summer evening lake and the fierce tornado, that with hideous crash thunders along its devastating course, each, all, proclaim the Deity.

If with the anatomist we survey this mysterious and complicated machine, the human body, and note the various parts and organs of which it is composed, their exact adaptation to the several functions assigned them, the delicacy of their organization, and the sympathy and nice dependence that exist among them—if we mark the osseous system which aids in giving strength, solidity and symmetry to the body—the muscular system through which, stimulated by the nervous power, we possess the faculty of locomotion, and perform all other motions necessary to our convenience and comfort—the nervous system, through the medium of which the muscles are stimulated to action, and by the agency of which we receive our ideas of external objects—through the medium of which, as an illustration, if we touch an object, the impression is immediately transmitted to the brain, which, stimulated by the impulse it receives, re-acts—this re-action constituting perceptive sensation or perception—the impression from that moment becoming an idea.

If we note the circulatory system which rolls the purple fluid through the veins to the right side of the heart, thence to the lungs to be decarbonized and revived by exposure to the atmospheric air—back to the left side of the heart, and then sends it forth a crimson current coursing through the arteries to nourish and beautify the system, to heighten the carnation on the cheek, and deepen the coral on the lip—in all we see the wisdom and power of the Creator.

If with the physiologist we investigate the origin of life, or with the chemist examine into the intimate nature of all material substances, or with the geologist, explore the bowels of the earth, we are led to the same conclusion and forced to exclaim in the sublime language of Chateaubriand: “There is a God! The herbs of the valley, the cedars of the mountain bless him—the insect sports in his beams—the elephant salutes him with the rising orb of day—the bird sings him in the foliage—the thunder proclaims him in the heavens—the ocean declares his immensity—man alone has said there is no God.”

The study of medicine as a science is, too, an excellent discipline to the mind, and he who pursues it merely as an amateur, for the sake of the pleasure arising from the knowledge, will find himself much better prepared for any mental effort than he would otherwise have been. Hence, we conceive, he does well, acts wisely, who devotes the time usually spent in miscellaneous reading, as a relaxation from severer studies, to the acquisition of a knowledge of this most interesting science.

Permit us now, gentlemen, to offer a few thoughts more specially related to the subject which will occupy a large portion of our time during the course of Lectures upon which we are just entering. “The proper study of mankind is man.” So says the poet, but with you, gentlemen, it is not precisely so. Your proper study for a considerable part of the time of our intercourse as preceptor and pupil will be *woman*—woman in all the phases and conditions of life—woman in all those situations *normal and abnormal* in which, owing to her peculiar organization, and her peculiar duties, she is liable to be placed. And as the duties of the regular course will confine us almost exclusively to the consideration of woman physically, we wish to improve the present opportunity to direct you to the contemplation of woman intellectually considered.

We do not design to enter into a metaphysical disquisition on the human intellect—this would open a field far too extensive to be explored at present. The human mind forms of itself a subject for the most sublime contemplation, a subject for deep philosophic research, a subject of astonishment and admiration. Who can solve its mysteries? Who can fathom its depths? Who can weigh its mighty powers?—Nor do we intend to institute a comparison between the mental capacity of woman and that of man—nor to enter into a labored argument to prove that in this respect she is the equal of her lord. Our purpose is briefly to notice some of the reasons why woman has not shone with greater brilliancy in the literary firmament; to direct your attention to the great influence she exercises, and the vast power she holds in all civilized countries, especially in our own, and the consequent necessity there exists that she should be furnished with an education that will qualify her for the responsible station she occupies.

For ages woman was not estimated as she deserved. Inferior to man in physical force, she was also considered beneath him in intellectual capacity, and was accordingly treated as the mere slave of his caprice and passion.—Denied access to the means of acquiring knowledge, and deprived of that mental training essential to bring into active exercise those latent and dormant qualities of mind which must otherwise be lost to their possessor and to the world, it would have been surprising—extraordinary indeed, if woman had furnished many examples of superior genius, for the simple reason that the human mind requires cultivation in order to its complete development. It has been compared to the marble in the quarry, which shows none of its inherent beauties till the skill of the polisher brings out the colors, makes the surface shine, and discovers the numerous ornamental clouds, spots and veins that run through the body of it.

Again the human mind has been compared to the statue which lies hid in the block of marble. Look upon that barren rock that rears itself on the shores of Italy and what do you see? Nothing but a huge unsightly mass of matter, yet within the bosom of that rock reposes a form the most exquisite. Rive out for the sculptor a solid block, let him exert his skill and genius upon it, and lo! there starts into existence—almost one might fancy into living, breathing existence—a form so perfect, of such admirable proportions, as to challenge the admiration of every beholder. What the skill of the artist is to the marble, education is to the human mind. There is still another comparison which seems to us to illustrate more perfectly the advantage to be derived from a proper mental training.

The human mind may be compared to a tender plant, the vine if you please. You may select one of the most flourishing, of the finest species, and plant it under the most favorable auspices—then neglect it, neglect to cultivate, to water, to prune, to trellis it, and, if it survive at all, it will be a mere dwarf—useless either for its foliage or its fruit. Take on the other hand an ordinary vine and plant it under ordinary circumstances—then tend it well, cultivate it, water it, lop off the redundant branches, train it so that the sun and air may exert their due influence upon it, give it something to twine its little tendrils around when it reaches them out for support, and in time you will have a most flourishing vine, remarkable for the beauty of its foliage and the deliciousness of its fruit.

So of the mind. You may select one of the most promising—cast in the finest mould and endowed with all those qualities calculated to ornament and render it useful—neglect to furnish it with that aliment it requires, by read-

ing, study and reflection, and it will sink into insignificance." But take an ordinary mind, and cultivate its powers by reading and meditation—afford it those helps to improvement which nature intended—give it something to call into exercise its various faculties, something to attach itself to as it rises, and it will arrive at an astonishing degree of perfection.

Many a woman possessing talents of a high order, has passed through life in obscurity, and died leaving no trace of existence behind, who, if she had been favored with the advantages we enjoy, might have been an ornament to her sex, have risen to the highest eminence and shed a light over all future generations. The oft quoted lines of Gray furnish a beautiful illustration here—

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

Those dark ages of ignorance, however, we are happy to say, have long since passed away, and in most civilized countries woman has assumed her proper position in society, as well as in the literary world. In our own country particularly, it is a matter of gratification to know that her importance is appreciated, and that there are institutions where she may receive an education calculated to improve those mental faculties and moral powers the development of which is essential to qualify her for the station she occupies as the former of the character of those who may be the future Governors of our Republic. In no other country is it so important as in ours, that the means of female education should be generally diffused and be of the right character, for in no other country can woman exercise so general an influence for either the welfare or the injury of the State.

Call to mind if you please the host of distinguished names that adorn the pages of our country's history—of men who have risen from the lower walks of life to stations of high honor and influence, and then point us if you can to the nursing mother, in any condition of life, who may not be rearing a hero, a statesman, or, we might add, a President. Point us if you can to the ragged poverty-stricken urchin in our streets, who may not become the most distinguished man of the age, and exert an influence for good or for evil that shall be as enduring as time itself. When Franklin, destitute and obscure and depressed, walked through the streets of our city with a roll of bread under each arm, and a third one in his hands, who would have predicted that he would become as he was afterwards styled by a distinguished European, the great American philosopher, the greatest in the world—that he would become the man to grasp the forked lightning of heaven and write with it his name in Fame's bright register?

And here, gentlemen, in the exercise of the pleasing duty of guiding the first shoots of genius, and the various passions of the youthful mind, lies the power of woman. Here she shares the empire with man, and exercises a silent, almost unnoticed, but powerful influence. Here, indeed, she has the destiny of our country, to a great extent, in her own hands. It was said by a writer of celebrity, in allusion to the influence of popular melodies on national character, "give me the making of the national songs, and you may have the making of the laws." With this writer we beg leave to differ—thus much, however, we do say, give us the training of the youth of our country, of those who will soon take the weight of government on their

own shoulders, whose judgments will be exercised, and whose voices raised in the councils of the nation, and whose bosoms bared in her battles, and we ask no more. It is easy for the youth of our country to be so trained that anarchy, bloodshed and despotism will be inevitable, while it is equally possible so to imbue their tender and susceptible minds with the principles of virtue and patriotism, that peace will reign in our borders, and under their fostering care our country rapidly advance to the highest point of national greatness. And with whom rests this pleasing duty? Obviously with woman. Who holds this lever that may move the world? Woman.

It is true that her influence is sometimes shown in a more direct and heroic manner, as numerous examples from history prove. It is mentioned as a remarkable fact that most of the revolutions of the Roman State owed their origin to woman. The abolition of the regal form of government and the founding of the Republic—the restoration of the consular form of government after the banishment of the *decemviri*, who had from their tyranny become oppressive and odious—and again, the change in the Constitution, by which the plebeians were admitted to the highest offices of State—each was owing to the influence of woman.

In our country, however, as before intimated, her power arises chiefly from the circumstance that our republican form of government permits any individual to be eligible to the highest office of State, and from the consequent fact that she has it in her power to instil virtuous or vicious principles into the minds of our embryo statesman.

On the mode of exercising this power may depend not only the well-being but the existence of this glorious Republic.

Another, though minor source of woman's power in our country, as indeed in all civilized countries, is the great influence she exercises over the will and the passions of men generally. This influence is undisputed, and indeed, is undeniable. Most of you, gentlemen, probably have felt it personally.—Let but woman take an interest in any great movement, civil, political, religious, or of any other character, and it is a sure omen of success. The age of chivalry is past, but the better sentiments of chivalry, we are happy to say, are not extinct. There still remains much of that high sense of honor, courtesy, and devotion to woman which was one of its distinguishing characteristics.

We are no ultraist on any subject, but if there be a subject on which we are an enthusiast, it is perhaps this that we are now contemplating—the influence of woman in relation to the welfare of our country.

We have within ourselves as a nation the elements, the principles of prosperity and duration. We have a solid foundation for the basis of our government. Our system has been tested under various contingencies. Judging from our past history and our present resources, we may be considered impregnable to any other nation. We have the history of former Republics and of the world to instruct us. If we err then, it must be amid such floods of light, that condemnation will inevitably rest on our own heads. If we fail it must be by our own hands. If we fail the righteous verdict of the world will be "*felo de se*." It will be a clear case of national suicide.

Yes, gentlemen, when the stars begin to grow dim on our national banner and our triumphant eagle to contract his pinions and droop his proud head—as the sun of our Republic goes down to rise no more, his last lingering rays will show us the words *self-destruction* written on that banner in characters of blood.

Should this be our unhappy fate, should our happy Republic be destined to have written upon her tomb "*sic transit gloria mundi*"—should the vestal fire in the temple of liberty, erected by our fathers, be smothered by the very hands that should guard and feed it, what an influence will it have on the fate of freedom throughout the world! Better, a thousand times better, for the cause of liberty, had we never existed as a nation.

If freedom shrieked when Kosciuszko fell—when the patriotic Pole in the agony of his bursting heart cried out,

"Oh, heaven above, my bleeding country save!
Is there no hand on high to shield the brave?"

—when ill-fated Poland was about to fall a sacrifice to Russian power and ambition—what will be the consequence when we fall, if fall we should!—Whither shall the Genius of Liberty retire? Oh! sirs, when the banner which was unfurled in the eventful days of '76, shall cease to wave over us as a nation of freemen, will it not become the winding sheet of Liberty to shroud her in the urn of everlasting death.

But we indulge in far brighter hopes, far more blissful visions. We see our country advancing in art, science, commerce, in everything that adorns a nation and renders it great. We see her taking the highest stand among the nations of the earth and from her thousand hills sending forth the voice of joy and gladness, of freedom and independence to the oppressed throughout the world.

Whether this blissful vision shall be realized remains with us to be determined. Upon us—upon every citizen of the Republic rests the responsibility, but especially upon woman. And we may indulge the hope that occupying this elevated position, wielding this immense power, she will prove faithful to the high and holy trust committed to her care, and exercise her influence in such a manner as shall be conducive to national, as well as individual welfare.

See to it then, gentlemen, that the springs of knowledge well up in every town, in every village, in every neighborhood whither your influence may extend. And above all, let their waters be pure: let them not be the shallow and turbid streams of superficial and merely intellectual, apart from religious instruction; but let them be the deep, pure, crystal waters of living knowledge. Let education be placed within the reach of all, and let that education be not such as will enlarge the desires and passions of the human heart, without strengthening or developing its moral powers, but such as will ennoble the mind, purify the heart, regulate the affections and refine the manners. We rejoice at the influence woman does exercise in our country, and we intend no unmeaning compliment when we say that we would never wish to live under a government where her influence was not felt—never—never. What indeed could there be inviting in a government formed and administered wholly in reference to the wants and wishes of man, independent of female influence. It is alas! too true,

"Through the range of man's dominion,
Terror is the ruling word,
And the standard of opinion,
Is the temper of the sword.

Woman commands with a milder control,
She rules by enchantment the realm of the soul;

And discord, content from her fury to cease,
Reposes entranced on the pillow of peace.
Man is the rock whose towering crest

Frowns o'er the barren mountain side ;

Woman the soft and mossy vest

That loves to clasp its sterile breast,

And wreathes its brow in verdant pride.

Man is the rugged lofty pine,

That frowns on many a wave beat shore ;

Woman 's the slender, graceful vine

Whose curling tendrils round it twine,

And deck its rough bark sweetly o'er."

Honored be woman in our heart of hearts. Bear us to the farthest verge of the green earth, to the icy shores of Lapland, or the burning sands of India, but bear us not beyond the gentle, soothing, holy influence of woman.

Write these sentiments then, gentlemen, on your hearts, and bear them with you through life. Carry them with you through the course of Lectures—they will tend to banish from your minds every unholy thought—bear them with you to the chamber of suffering and confiding woman, they will chasten and elevate your thoughts and render the welfare of your patient an object of primary importance in your minds. Do this and you shall have your reward in the consciousness of rectitude which you will have in your own minds, in the confidence and affection of your patients, and in the enviable reputation you will thereby secure.

During our intercourse as preceptor and pupil, or rather we would say, as friends, as fellow-worshippers at the shrine of knowledge, as patient and untiring students of what is already known in our profession, and enthusiastic and philosophic inquirers after truths yet to be discovered, it will be my duty and pleasure to lecture on several important branches, and, considered in reference to their bearing on your character as physicians, and your success in obtaining the favor and confidence of the people when you come to the practice of your profession, perhaps the most important of all you will learn.

For while, as the able and successful accoucheur, you bring immeasurable joy on one of the most important occasions occurring in domestic life—joy to the husband who has confided to your honor and skill the being dearer to him than life, and who would willingly permit you, as has been suggested on certain occasions, to draw the life blood from his veins and infuse it into hers, if you could thereby resuscitate her sinking system—joy to the woman who is looking up with anxious solicitude to you as the guardian of her life and that of her offspring—joy to the whole circle of friends by whom she is surrounded, at the same time you secure their warmest gratitude and friendship.

While as the skilful and confidential adviser in female diseases, you give health to many a body, peace to many a family, and happiness to many a heart, you at the same time enlist in your favor that most powerful agent of which we have been speaking—female influence.

And then again, gentlemen, in medical jurisprudence, (the solution of many questions in which belong especially to the duties of this chair,) you may have frequent opportunities of bringing honor to yourself and the profession by evincing your proficiency in medico-legal knowledge. You will be as it were,

the "power behind the throne, greater than the throne." You will be looked up to by another of the learned professions with respect and confidence. You will rule in the courts of justice. Upon you it will depend whether crime shall be punished, or the innocent and oppressed go unavenged. Whether the destroyer of his species shall have justice meted out to him, or the infraction and insulted law for the preservation of life remain unsatisfied. Upon you it will depend whether or not the wanton and profligate prostitute shall, with impunity, put a period to the life of her offspring—whether the base, accursed libertine shall bring ruin to the innocent and blooming maiden, and distraction and anguish to her friends, and yet go unwhipped of justice.

Reflect on these points, gentlemen, and we are persuaded you will readily appreciate the importance of these branches.

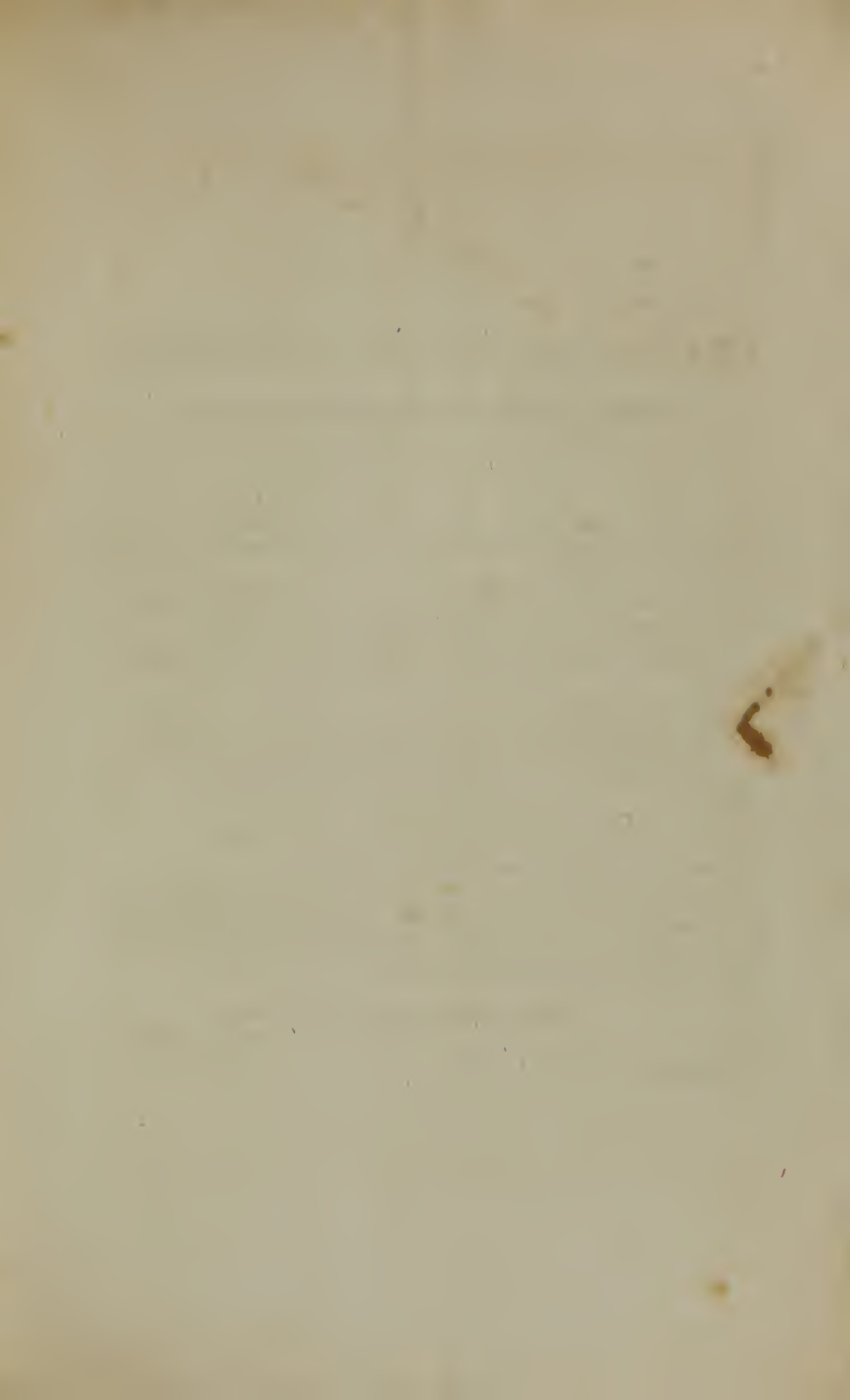
You have come to this city athirst for medical knowledge. You need not be disappointed. Here are fountains of various ages; some that have been sending forth their streams for a long series of years—others of more recent origin, and others again, but newly dug out and walled up,—all fresh and sparkling. The choice will be with yourselves, but at whichever you may conclude to satiate your thirst, permit us to say to you "drink deep or taste not," for in medicine as in other sciences, "a little learning is a dangerous thing."

You come in all the ardor of youth, emulous to excel in your profession. We can appreciate your motives—we can honor your enthusiasm.—We have not so long been free from the walls of our alma mater, but that we can sympathise with your feelings—but that we can recollect the time when the prospect of a deeper insight into the science of medicine, though it required labor and time, was charming to our mind.

The *via ad astra* is open before you and for your encouragement we will say that there are doubtless discoveries to be made, and facts and principles to be developed in almost every science equally as astonishing and important as any already known.

This being the case then, why may not other Newtons, other Franklins arise in philosophy, and other Hunters, Jenners and Rushes in our own profession? Why may not some of you, gentlemen—why may not all of you "climb the highest steep of fame, and carve yourselves a deathless name?" Why may you not erect for yourselves a monument which time's effacing fingers will not obliterate, and yet bear your honors so meekly—so keep the good of your fellow-man and the glory of your Creator in view, that when the light of eternity shall open to your vision the bright archives of the skies, your names may be found emblazoned in the honored list of earth's noblest heroes.

With regard to our Institution, gentlemen, it becomes me as the youngest member of the faculty, to say but little. This much, however, we may, in justice to our feelings, be permitted to indulge in. We humbly hope and believe, that applied to us as a college, there is *no such word as fail*. Our motto at present is "*aut viam inveniam aut faciam*;" and when we have found or made this way, so that we can lay aside this motto, then, gentlemen, our badge will be *excelsior*, and when we have reached this higher rank in usefulness and perfection, still, gentlemen, it will be and always be *excelsior*.



PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, FIFTH, SOUTH OF WALNUT STREET.

THE SPRING AND SUMMER COURSE OF LECTURES FOR 1848, will be commenced on Monday, March 6th, 1848, and be continued four months, by the following faculty:

JAS. McCLINTOCK, M. D., *General, Special and Surgical Anatomy.*

J. R. BURDEN, M. D., *Materia Medica and Therapeutics.*

D. PEREIRI GARDNER, M. D., *Chemistry and Medical Jurisprudence.*

HENRY GIBBONS, M. D., *Institutes and Practice of Medicine.*

JAMES McCLINTOCK, M. D., *Principles and Practice of Surgery.*

LOUIS H. BEATTY, M. D., *Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children.*

S. R. McCLINTOCK, M. D., *Demonstrator of Anatomy.*

RICHARD BURR, M. D., *Prosector of Surgery.*

Fees for the full course, \$75. Fee for those who have attended two full courses in other Colleges, \$40. Matriculation to be paid once only, \$5. Graduation, \$20. Practical Anatomy, including Recapitulatory Lectures, \$10. The Dissecting Rooms will be opened on the 1st of March.

For further information inquire of

JAMES McCLINTOCK, M. D., DEAN,

No. 1 North Eleventh Street.

Philadelphia, December, 1, 1847



